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ABSTRACT

This report is an evaluation of a selected New York City Umbrella Program, funded under a special grant from the New York State Legislature. The program, which operated in three East Harlem schools, served eighty disadvantaged monolingual and bilingual children in the third through sixth grades who were two years or more below grade level in reading and in mathematics. Program goals were (1) to significantly improve students' basic skills in reading and in mathematics and (2) to educate parents and students about social and educational problems and about the use of community and school resources in dealing with these problems. The evaluation objectives for parent workshops were only partially met because evaluation procedures were misunderstood. In reading and mathematics achievement, only the third and sixth graders and the bilingual group met the objectives. It was concluded that the parent workshops, had little impact on the community, that the tutorial center was effective in increasing the reading and mathematics skills of the participants, and that student workshops appeared to be an effective means of assisting students with their educational and social problems. (Author/BS)

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EVALUATION REPORT

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Parent Resource and Tutorial Center

School Year 1975 - 1976

Lester J. Schwartz

UD017145

An Evaluation of Selected New York City Umbrella Programs funded under a Special Grant of the New York State Legislature performed for the Board of Education of the City of New York for the 1975-1976 school year.

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I: THE PROGRAM

The program, "Parent Resource and Tutorial Center, a component of the citywide School Community Interaction Umbrella Program, was in operation during the 1975-76 school year in three schools in District 4, East Harlem. The program had two major goals; a) to improve significantly the target students' basic skills in reading and mathematics, and b) to educate parents and students about social and educational problems and the use of community and school resources to deal with these problems.

The remedial portion of the program, an after-school tutorial program, was intended for disadvantaged elementary school children who were two years or more below grade level in reading and mathematics. It served 80 children in grades three through six in P.S. 83M who attended the center on Tuesday and Thursday each week from 3:00 to 5:00 P.M. Pupils were selected for the program by the P.S. 83 school administrators based on teacher recommendations. The selection criteria were that students be significantly below grade level in reading and mathematics and be able to benefit from small group instruction. In all cases admission to the program was voluntary. Included among the 80 children were 22 who attended a bilingual minischool which is housed in P.S. 83.

The tutorial center consisted of a reading class, a mathematics class, and a bilingual class. The classes were staffed

by three regularly licensed teachers who were assisted by three student aides who were seniors in high school.

The monolingual students were grouped into two classes with 29 pupils in each. Each class spent half of each afternoon with the Reading teacher and the other half with the Mathematics teacher. The 22 bilingual (Spanish) students spent the entire afternoon studying mathematics and reading in one room with the bilingual teacher.

The tutorial component began operating at the start of the school year and will run to the end of the school year.

The community education portion of the program was accomplished through two kinds of workshops; one series of workshops was designed for parents and met in P.S. 83, the other series served students in Junior High School 13 and 117.

There were 18 parent workshops conducted from October 1, 1975 up to June 1, 1976. An additional parent workshop was scheduled in June. Workshop topics included genetics, podiatry, breast cancer, venereal disease, behavior problems of children, sex education, family planning and pupil school records. Workshop leaders were professionals on the staffs of community agencies and schools who volunteered their service for the workshops. Parents were notified of the workshops through take home flyers distributed to students in the schools. Parent attendance varied from between 8 to 15 at each workshop.

The student workshops were held at Junior High Schools 117 and 13. Thirteen workshops were held from October 1, 1975 to June 1, 1976; five were on venereal disease, three on alcoholism,

one on sex education, two on student self image and two on drug abuse and detection. Two more student workshops are scheduled during June. The workshop leaders who, again, were professionals who volunteered their services, conducted three periods of a given workshop on each of the workshop days, making a total of 39 workshop periods. Class attendance varied from 15 to 25 which resulted in about 60 students participating in a workshop each day. It is estimated that between 600 and 700 students participated in the workshops through the year.

Generally, the workshop format consisted of presentation of information which sometimes included films and a question and answer - discussion period. Starting about March, 1976 the student workshops were videotaped so that they might be shown to other classes.

The staff which administered the program consisted of a Coordinator, who coordinated both the workshop and tutorial components, a family associate who assisted in developing and implementing the workshops, an educational assistant who also worked on the workshops and had particular responsibility for the videotaping, and a parent program assistant who served as laisson to the parents and was responsible for encouraging parent involvement in the program. The staff also included the tutorial personnel described before.

II: EVALUATIVE PROCEDURES

Evaluation Objective 1.

As a result of participation in the Parent Resource and Tutorial Center Program, 60 percent of the parents will, upon completion of applicable workshops, demonstrate increased knowledge with respect to Pupil Records, Cancer, Venereal Disease, Family Planning, Alcoholism, Child Abuse and School Board Elections as measured by pre and post testing on a fifteen item instrument, separate for each workshop, developed by staff personnel. The criterion of success will be the ability of the parent to respond correctly to at least 10 of the 15 instrument items on the post test.

Subjects: The subjects were to consist of all parents who participated in and completed the appropriate workshops. Pre and post tests, however, were administered only to the 33 parents who participated in the "Pupil Records" workshops. (The reasons for this are discussed in the Limitations on the Procedure section.)

Method and Procedures: A fifteen item test (see Appendix A) on pupil records was developed by the program staff and administered twice to the parents; at the start and the conclusion of the workshops. A parallel form of the test, in Spanish, was administered to the Spanish speaking parents.

Analysis of Data: The pre and post test results were analyzed by a correlated t test. A count was also made of the parents who responded correctly to at least ten items on the pre and post test.

Evaluation Objective 2.

As a result of participation in the Parent Resource and Tutorial Center Program, the reading grade of the students will show a statistically significant difference between the real post-test score and the anticipated post test score as measured by relevant portions of the Stanford Achievement Test.

Subjects: The subjects were to consist of all the participants in the program. Of the 80 who were enrolled in the program during the year, 49 received both pre and post tests (36 monolingual and 13 bilingual). Of the 31 other students 16 were absent either for the pre or post test. Fifteen other students transferred from the school during the year and were replaced by students who were not pretested.

Method and Procedures: The New York City Reading Achievement Test was administered at the start of the program in September 1975 and again in March 1976. The appropriate test forms were used at each grade level.

Analysis of Data: The test results were analyzed by the "Real (treatment) Post Test vs. Anticipated (without treatment) Post Test" design. The data for the monolingual students was analyzed by grade and for the entire group. In the bilingual group the

data was analyzed for only the entire group since the N's in each grade ranged from only 1 to 5. Since the Historical Regression Analysis compares each student to his or herself, combining the grades is a reasonable procedure.

Evaluation Objective 3.

As a result of participation in the Parent Resource and Tutorial Center Program, the mathematics grade of the students will show a statistically significant difference between the real post test score and the anticipated post test score as measured by relevant portions of the Stanford Achievement Test.

Subjects: Of the 80 enrolled students, 50 took both the pre and post test in mathematics (38 monolingual and 12 bilingual). Fifteen students were absent for either the pre or the post test and fifteen more transferred from the school during the year.

Method and Procedures: The New York City Mathematics Achievement Test was administered at the start of the program in September 1975 and again in March 1976. The appropriate test forms were used at each grade level.

Analysis of Data: The test results were analyzed by the "Real (treatment) Post Test vs. Anticipated (without treatment) Post Test" design. The data for the monolingual students was analyzed by grade and for the entire group. In the bilingual group the data was analyzed for only the entire group since the N's in each grade ranged from only 1 to 5. Since the Historical Regression

Analysis compares each student to his or herself, combining the grades is a reasonable procedure.

Evaluation Objective 4.

The program, as actually carried out, will coincide with the program as described in the proposal and any subsequent addendums/modifications.

Method and Procedures: The evaluator made three visits to the tutorial center, three to parent workshops, viewed a videotape of a student workshop and interviewed parents and school administrators.

Limitations on the Procedure

The first evaluation objective related to the parent workshops called for pre and post testing of all the workshops. The program staff was unfamiliar with evaluation procedures and misunderstood what was required. They had, in fact, prepared questionnaires on two kinds of workshop topics beside "Pupil Records" but these were not usable since they dealt with family demographic information only. Thus in the Spring, after the evaluator had been retained, the staff, with no deception intended, stated that they had administered tests in three different kinds of workshops. Consequently, evaluation Objective 1 could only be partially evaluated.

III: FINDINGS

Parent Workshop Test Results

The evaluation objective related to the parent workshops was: to determine whether as a result of participation in the Parent Resource and Tutorial Center Program, 60 percent of the parents will, upon completion of applicable workshops, demonstrate increased knowledge with respect to Pupil Records, Cancer, Venereal Disease, Family Planning, Alcoholism, Child Abuse and School Board Elections as measured by pre and post testing on a fifteen item instrument, separate for each workshop, developed by staff personnel. The criterion of success will be the ability of the parent to respond correctly to at least 10 of the 15 instrument items on the post test.

Table 1 summarizes the results of the pre and post tests that were administered for the "Pupil Records" workshops.

Table 1

RESULTS OF PRE AND POST TESTS OF PARENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF PUPILS' SCHOOL RECORDS (N=33)

	Parents who responded correctly to ten items or more		Mean Score	t
	N	%		
Pre Test	8	24.3	6.58	
				14.151**
Post Test	33	100.0	13.91	

**Significant at the .01 level

Only a quarter of the parents met the pass criterion of ten correct responses on the pre test compared to 100 percent on the post test. On the pre test the scores ranged from two correct to 13 with a mean of 6.6 while on the post test the scores ranged from 11 to 15 with a mean of 13.9. The improvement in the mean score was significant beyond the .01 level.

Although the obtained results related to the parent workshops was positive and significant the evaluation objective was only partially met since other specified workshops were not evaluated.

Reading Achievement Test Results

The evaluation objective related to pupil reading achievement was: to determine whether as a result of participation in the Parent Resource and Tutorial Center Program, the reading grade of the students will show a statistically significant difference between the real post test score and the anticipated post test score as measured by relevant portions of the Stanford Achievement Test.

Table 2 summarizes the results of the Historical Regression Analyses by grade for the monolingual students and for the bilingual students combined.

The evaluation objective was met for the monolingual students in grades 3 and 6 and for the bilingual students combined. All groups exceed their expected growth in reading and all but grade 5 showed mean gains of four months or more than what would have been predicted but the pre post test differences

in grades 4 and 5 were based on N's of six and nine which could be too easily effected by chance variations. In this connection, it should be noted that the combined monolingual students showed

Table 2

HISTORICAL REGRESSION ANALYSES OF N.Y.C.
READING ACHIEVEMENT TEST RESULTS

Group	N	Pre Test Mean	Predicted Post Test Mean	Actual Post Test Mean	t
Grade 3	10	1.79	2.06	2.44	3.917**
Grade 4	6	2.47	2.82	3.20	1.250 N.S.
Grade 5	9	3.08	3.42	3.61	.555 N.S.
Grade 6	11	4.21	4.65	5.73	3.870**
All Grades	36	2.96	3.33	3.87	3.830**
Bilingual Combined	13	2.33	2.62	3.55	2.680*

*Significant at the .05 level
**Significant at the .01 level

a gain of five months more than expected gaining on the average, nine months during the seven months elapsing between the pre and post tests. The bilingual students increased their mean reading scores by over a year during the same period.

Mathematics Achievement Test Results

The evaluation objective related to pupil achievement in

mathematics was: to determine whether as a result of participation in the Parent Resource and Tutorial Center Program, the mathematics grade of the students will show a statistically significant difference between the real post test score and the anticipated post test score as measured by relevant portions of the Stanford Achievement Test.

Table 3 summarizes the results of the Historical Regression Analyses by grade for the monlingual students and for the bilingual students combined.

Table 3

HISTORICAL REGRESSION ANALYSES OF N.Y.C. MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT TEST RESULTS

Group	N	Pre Test Mean	Predicted Post Test Mean	Actual Post Test Mean	t
Grade 3	11	1.54	1.75	2.70	6.090**
Grade 4	7	2.59	3.01	3.09	.464 N.S.
Grade 5	9	3.50	3.98	4.68	1.759 N.S.
Grade 6	11	4.82	5.46	5.73	.687 N.S.
All Grades	38	3.14	3.58	4.12	3.292**
Bilingual Combined	12	2.74	3.07	3.89	2.867**

**Significant at the .01 level

Again the small N's in each grade confound the results. Although every grade achieved mean mathematics scores beyond

expectation, only the results for grade 3 and for the monolingual students combined and the bilingual students combined were significant. When the monolingual students in all grades are combined to produce an N of 38, the gain of one year is about double the expected gain and significant. The bilingual students had an average gain of almost twelve months which was almost four times the expected growth.

Other Findings

This section is based on eight site visits that were made between February 6, 1976 and May 10, 1976.

Facilities and Materials

Tutorial Component -The classrooms in the afterschool tutorial component were well suited for remedial programs. The bilingual and mathematics teachers taught the same subjects in P.S. 83 during the day and, therefore, were able to use their own rooms. The materials in both rooms were rich and varied. Although the reading teacher did not use the reading room during the day she did work in P.S. 83 and was therefore able to use the full resources of the room. The arrangement of the teachers being part of the regular school staff was advantageous in that it resulted in an excellently supplied tutorial program at little additional cost. The teachers had no complaints relative to materials or the facilities they were using. The rooms themselves were good sized, cheerful, and nicely decorated.

Workshop Component - The parent workshops were held in a very large room in P.S. 83 which also served as the office for

the Coordinator and her staff. The room was quite large enough to accomodate the parents comfortably. The student workshops were held in regular classrooms which seemed to be very adequate for use as workshops.

The program's equipment consisted of a duplicating machine used for announcements, questionnaires, and other materials used in the workshops, a telephone, and a typewriter, a video tape-deck and a camera. A playback console was added in the spring which was to be used for taping workshops which could then be replayed to other groups. Unfortunately, the video equipment broke down in April and therefore was of limited use.

The soft materials were written and reproduced by the staff. Additionally, the workshop leaders usually brought along materials that they distributed.

Staff Functioning and Program Operation-Tutorial Component - The teachers performed very competently. They were prepared, well organized and knew the individual needs of each child. The high school assistants also did an excellent job in assisting the teachers given their level of experience and training.

A teacher and an assistant, however, could not adequately attend to the needs of all the students given the large class size. The students were extremely retarded in basic skills and most required a great deal of individual attention.

The tutorial staff showed flexibility in using a wide variety of techniques depending on the needs of the moment. They were a dedicated and thoroughly professional group.

Pupil attendance was excellent, the coordinator reported that fewer than 70 students were present on only six days during the year. The group was also relatively stable. Sixty five students who began the program were still enrolled as of May 1st. Fifteen students were transferred from the school during the year and were replaced by other students who met the selection criteria.

The Workshop Component - The staff, with the exception of the parent program assistant, performed competently in the face of difficulties not of their making. Because of the city-wide budget crisis, potential workshop leaders were, often, unwilling or unable to volunteer their services. Consequently, the staff was unable to schedule the number or kind of workshops that the proposal called for.

Low attendance at the parent workshops was a more serious problem. Eight to 14 parents attended each workshop and considering that some parents attended all the workshops, the impact was limited. Much of the problem appeared related to the substandard job that was done by the parent program assistant. She seemed to make few efforts to interest the parents in the workshops or in carrying out her general parent laisson responsibilities.

In other respects the workshops seemed useful. Parents were attentive, interested and eager to obtain the information that was provided. The same could be said of the students in the one student workshop that was observed. (Two others that were scheduled to be observed were cancelled because the volunteer workshop leaders did not appear.)

Both parents and students often became so involved that

they talked about or raised questions about highly charged personal problems. In response workshop leaders tended to be informational and helpful. Skill in group dynamics would have been useful in fuller development of topics.

Departures from the Proposal

The proposal called for an emphasis, in the parent workshops, on understanding the educational system. The workshops, however, covered a wide variety of topics including three on pupil records. This modification resulted from the parents' requests to hold other kinds of workshops. The proposal indicated that parent workshops would be held in four schools. One target school P.S. 107 was closed during the year. In another, P.S. 72, the parents felt that the previous year's workshops had satisfied them and felt no need for another cycle. The program staff reported that they had attempted to schedule workshops in the third school, P.S. 108, at least ten times without success and felt resistance from that school.

In all other respects the program conformed to the proposal and was servicing the target population as described in the proposal.

Recommendations From Past Report.

As of the writing of this report, last year's report had not yet been received either by the program coordinator or by the "Umbrella" office at the Board of Education. Consequently, the implementation of last year's recommendations cannot be reviewed.

IV: SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Major Findings

1. The evaluation objective for parent workshops was only partially met because evaluation procedures were misunderstood. In the one kind of workshop that was evaluated, "Pupil Records", the objective was met with 100 percent of the parents meeting the criterion of knowledge of pupil records.

The workshops had relatively low attendance with a small nucleus of parents attending all the workshops.

2. In reading achievement, only the third and sixth graders and the bilingual group met the evaluation objective. However, when the small N's of each grade were combined, the evaluation objective was met. As a combined group the monolingual students, on the average, showed more than twice their expected gain of four months. The bilingual students made almost four times their expected gain of three months. These gains of eight and twelve months respectively occurred during a seven month pre-post test period.

3. In mathematics achievement, the third graders and the bilingual group met the evaluation objective. Again when the 3rd and 6th grade monolingual students are combined the objective is met. The monolingual students on the average, gained about one year compared to an expected gain of four and a half months

and the bilingual class gained close to twelve months compared to an expected gain of three months.

4. The tutorial center was well managed by a competent staff. The student workshops appeared to be well conducted but there were problems in obtaining workshop leaders and some workshops had to be cancelled. Workshop leaders tended to be informational. The parent workshops had problems of low attendance but were well conducted and received with enthusiasm by the parents who did attend.

Conclusions

1. The parent workshops, although well run, reached a very small number of parents and had little impact on the community. The workshops were successful for the parent who attended.

2. The afternoon tutorial center seemed to be very effective in increasing the reading and mathematics skills of the participants. The results, by grade, often show no statistical significance but this is probably due to the small N's involved. The gains for the combined group are very impressive.

3. The student workshops appear to be a potentially effective means of assisting students with their educational and social problems. However, there was no formal evaluation objective connected to the workshops and conclusions about them are tentative.

Recommendations

1. Because of limited impact the parent workshops should

be deemphasized. If they are to continue as a major component much more energy and resources need to be put into a parent outreach program to increase parent participation.

2. Three more assistants (one for each class) should be added to the tutorial center staff. Although it has done an excellent job, the staff-student ratio is too high.

3. The student workshops should be further developed. A skilled group leader should be added to the staff to develop more discussion at the workshops. If a group specialist cannot be added a working relationship with a local college should be explored. The college might be able to provide interns who could lead groups.

4. The student workshops should be formally evaluated next year by the evaluation consultant.

5. The program office could use another telephone instrument given the use involved in workshop development and scheduling.

APPENDIX A

Questions on the "Pupil Records" test
(Responses are "true", "false", or "don't know")

1. Parents are entitled to inspect or review records on their children.

2. Records marked confidential are kept by the guidance counsellor.

3. Grades on the report card should be the same as those on the official record.

4. When your child graduates, all records are destroyed.

5. Health records are needed only when your child enteres school.

6. All school records are kept 50 years.

7. Records of pupils are sent to the Welfare Department if parents are on public assistance.

8. A child's attendance record is an official document.

9. The record of a child's school work follows him from school to school.

10. Parents have the right to object to information on their child's record folder.

11. Results of city or state-wide tests are recorded on the child's official record.

12. Important parent interviews or conferences with school officials are recorded on the child's record.

13. If you or your child are known to any social or health agency, it is recorded on your child's record.

14. A record is sent to the health department if a child is using drugs.

15. How your child gets along with other children is recorded in his records.